AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Currently Amended) The ~~use~~ method according to claim ~~1,~~ 21, wherein said ratio is in the range of from 1:1 to 3:1.

3. (Currently Amended) The ~~use~~ method according to claim 2, wherein said ratio is in the range of from 2:1 to 3:1.

4. (Currently Amended) The ~~use~~ method according to ~~any one of the preceding claims,~~ claim 21, wherein the dosage of manganese is in the range of from 25 to 150 µmol/kg body weight.

5. (Currently Amended) The ~~use~~ method according to claim 4, wherein the dosage of manganese is in the range of from 50 to 125 µmol/kg body weight.

6. (Currently Amended) The ~~use~~ method according to claim 5, wherein the dosage of manganese is in the range of from 50 to 100 µmol/kg body weight.

7. (Currently Amended) The ~~use~~ method according to ~~any one of the preceding claims,~~ claim 21, wherein the uptake promoter is selected from the group consisting of alanine, valine, leucine, tryptophan, methionine, isoleucine, proline, phenylalanine, serine, glycine, threonine, cysteine, asparagine, glutamine, tyrosine, aspartic acid, glutamic acid, arginine, lycine and histidine.

8. (Currently Amended) The ~~use~~ method according to claim 7, wherein said uptake promoter is ~~selected from~~ a neutral amino ~~acids including asparagine and aspartic~~ acid.

9. (Currently Amended) The ~~use~~ method according to claim 8, wherein said promoter is L-alanine.

10. (Original) An MRI contrast medium composition for oral administration for examination of the liver comprising as an active ingredient a physiologically acceptable manganese (II) compound and an uptake promoter comprising one or more amino acids wherein Mn and the promoter are used in a molar ratio higher than that at which coordination compounds between Mn and promoter are formed to a substantial degree, wherein the molar ratio of Mn to promoter is in the range of from 2:3 to 3:1.

11. (Original) A composition according to claim 10, wherein said ratio is in the range of from 1:1 to 3:1.

12. (Original) A composition according to claim 11, wherein said ratio is in the range of from 2:1 to 3:1.

13. (Currently Amended) A composition according to ~~any one of claims 10 to 12,~~ claim 10, wherein the dosage of manganese is in the range of from 25 to 150 µmol/kg body weight.

14. (Original) A composition according to claim 13, wherein the dosage of manganese is in the range of from 50 to 125 µmol/kg body weight.

15. (Original) A composition according to claim 14, wherein the dosage of manganese is in the range of from 50 to 100 µmol/kg body weight.

16. (Currently Amended) A composition according to ~~any one of claims 10 to 15,~~ claim 10, wherein the uptake promoter is selected from the group consisting of alanine, valine, leucine, tryptophan, methionine, isoleucine, proline, phenylalanine, serine, glycine, threonine, cysteine, asparagine, glutamine, tyrosine, aspartic acid, glutamic acid, arginine, lycine and histidine.

17. (Original) A composition according to claim 16, wherein said promoter is selected from neutral amino acids including asparagine and aspartic acid.

18. (Original) A composition according to claim 17, wherein said promoter is L-alanine.

19. (Original) An MRI contrast medium kit comprising a first container accomodating a physiologically acceptable manganese (II) compound, and a second container accomodating an uptake promoter comprising one or more amino acids, and optionally, instructions for the use of the kit, the molar ratio of Mn to promoter being within the range of 2:3 to 3:1.

20. (Currently Amended) A kit according to claim 19, wherein said molar ratio~~, the dosage of manganese and/or said uptake promoter~~ is ~~(are) as defined in any one of claims 11 to 18~~ in the range of from 2:1 to 3:1.

21. (Currently Amended) A method for MRI of a mammalian liver ~~using an MRI contrast medium composition according to any one of claims 10 to 18, said method~~ comprising ~~oral administration of~~ orally administering an effective amount of said MRI contrast medium composition according to claim 10.

22. (New) The method according to claim 8, wherein said neutral amino acid is selected from the group consisting of asparagine and aspartic acid.